



MEMO

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Deb Schildroth, Assistant City Manager
Date: May 11, 2021
Subject: Campus and Community Commission Report – Landlord/Tenant Relations

In March 2019, the City Council directed the Campus and Community Commission (CCC) to work on investigating landlord/tenant relations. This particular issue is an element of CCC's work on community inclusivity. Students had initially raised concerns about the lease gap and additional topics such as being a good tenant, how to address issues with landlords, and how to effectively resolve disputes. Based on this, Council directed CCC with the following tasks:

- What information do students wish they knew about tenant responsibilities before renting?
- Where do rent informational resources exist?
- Hosting a joint discussion among renters and landlords to discuss these concerns.
- Reporting to the City Council regarding assessment and outcome of the discussion.

CCC followed through with these tasks and presented a report to Council on May 26, 2020. The recommended actions resulting from these tasks were the implementation of a mediation process and exploring ways to provide information and awareness of the rental process including the understanding of terms and conditions of lease agreements.

Council then directed CCC to recommend ways to revamp and promote the Rent Smart Ames website as well as utilize other forms of informational materials with the input of tenants and landlords. Council also directed CCC to inquire with the City Attorney about the potential for what might be pursued to expand the Story County mediation of forcible entry and detainer to include things that are of interest to ISU and the students.

In response to this directive, CCC has prepared the attached report and will be available at the May 11th Council meeting for discussion. Council is being asked to consider the next steps:

- Landlord/Tenant Relations 2021 report - after reviewing and discussing the report, Council must decide whether to accept it and implement the recommendations or if this issue requires further study by CCC. If Council feels further study is necessary, it should identify what questions CCC should work on to answer.
- Provide direction to CCC to work on the next issue – if Council believes no further work is needed by CCC regarding Landlord/Tenant Relations, then the next issue needs to be identified. The following list was presented at the September 12, 2017 City Council meeting and is the most current list on file:
 - Parking in Campustown
 - Public gathering space in Campustown (*previously addressed*)
 - Inclusive community principles:
 - Education of tenants/landlords (*in progress*)
 - Rent Smart Ames utilization (*in progress*)
 - Welcoming/inclusiveness of Campustown/Downtown
 - Retention of recent graduates
 - Connect-ability between areas of Ames

CCC members will be present at the May 11th Council meeting and may have additional comments they wish to share regarding the next steps with implementation and/or give input on new topic areas to address. Council may choose to direct CCC to begin addressing one of the remaining issues listed above or identify an alternative issue. In either case, it is important for Council to provide clear direction about what should be included in response to the Council's request (e.g., what questions to answer, whether there are specific groups Council believes must be consulted, timeframe expectations, etc.) so that CCC